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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6679
INFO RUCNLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7681
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 6407
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 3425
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6342
RHMFIUU/11AF ELMENDORF AFB AK
RHMFIUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 8328
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 8058
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 001031

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SUBJECT: INTERNAL SECURITY PRIORITY FOR NEW UPA GOVERNMENT
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¶1. (SBU) Summary: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told the first meeting of the victorious United Progressive Alliance (UPA) leaders on May 20 that internal security will be the new government's highest priority. The same day two newspapers columns that are often used by the government to leak stories reported that the GOI may already have in hand a road map designed to rework India's security apparatus. One aspect of the plan is to establish a National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), modeled after the U.S.'s own NCTC. Although we are encouraged by the GOI's declarations making security a priority, the real test will be how quickly they unveil their plan formally in parliament and then implement their strategies. End Summary.

Internal Security is Priority One

¶2. (SBU) The Prime Minister told his UPA allies at the first meeting after the elections on May 20 that internal security would be the new government's highest priority. It is not surprising that the GOI views internal security as an urgent issue. Six months ago it appeared the Congress-led UPA government was reeling under the political impact of the Mumbai terror attacks and few gave it a chance of surviving the national elections. The UPA government was widely criticized for an inept and uncoordinated response after the attacks and the failure to gather actionable intelligence to prevent the attack. Improbably, the Congress government resurrected itself and stormed back to power, and along the way did not forget the lesson that security will be an enduring issue and that they must develop capacity and skills to handle future Mumbai-style attacks.

¶3. (SBU) The PM's words to his allies were accompanied by two news stories by journalists who frequently serve as conduits for GOI leaks information that the GOI already in hand a road map for strengthening internal security. Pranab Dhal Samanta reported that PM Singh had commissioned National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan to put together an action plan months ago designed to strengthen India's internal security after the Mumbai attacks. This plan was to be a blueprint for the incoming government. With the reelection of the UPA government it was reported that PM Singh has advised NSA Narayanan to start fleshing out the plan and work out the

details for implementation.

National Network Security Architecture

¶4. (U) One important feature of the plan is the
establishment of a NCTC. NCTC would be tasked to develop a
detailed reporting structure and create a joint command with
Central and States representatives for Naxal-affected areas.
Structurally, at the district level there will be "collation
and fusion" centers where intelligence is collected and
analyzed. This information will then be forwarded to the
state level Multi-agency Centers (MAC). Threat information
deemed credible will be passed to the national level NCTC for
operational action. The NCTC will initially report to the
Intelligence Bureau (IB) and it will have representatives
from all intelligence, military and security agencies.

¶5. (U) According to Times of India, the road map also
contains several other initiatives, including the development
of an action plan to help "Red Zone" states, states most
threatened by the Naxal insurgency, a Multi-Purpose National
Identify Card, a judicial task force to fast-track terror
related cases and the NATGRID, which is an integrated
national database. The NATGRID's goal is to connect Delhi
with other major Indian cities though a computerized
database.

The Commonwealth Games

¶6. (SBU) Security for the Commonwealth Games is also part of
the road map. The new government is aware that the high
visibility of the Commonwealth Games presents an attractive
target for terrorists. Several Commonwealth countries have
expressed concern to the GOI and the U.S. over India's lack
of a security strategy to ensure the safety of athletes and
spectators. It is vital, therefore, for the Indian
government to ensure that the games are perceived to be
terrorism-proof by the international community.

Comment

¶7. (U) If approved, the NCTC would be one of a growing list
of agencies, including the National Investigative Agency and
Multi-agency Centers, competing for resources. It is unclear
how effective it would be in the short term. Also, it is
unclear how the NATGRID would integrate with the NCTC or
other intelligence and security agencies. At this stage,
although we are encouraged by the GOI's positive words on
security, we see this as merely a first step in a new
strategy for combating terrorism. The real test will come in
how quickly and smoothly the government can implement the
plans and blueprints that are being talked about today. End
Comment.

BURLEIGH